

Europass Curriculum Vitae



Personal information

Surname(s) / First name(s)	ACTON, ABIGAIL (Ms.)
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E-mail	acton@writespeak.be
Nationality	British
Date of birth	14/11/65
Gender	Female
Desired employment / Occupational field	Journalist/Editor/Researcher

With over 20 years of experience, Ms Acton has divided her career equally between journalism and training adults in specialist communication. Concise, dynamic, accessible – would describe both her teaching and her writing.

As a trainer she has run writing for the web courses at DG Regio and the European Parliament, high level language training for interpreters at the European Parliament and the use of story telling in communication. She has also taught at Tipik, the company at which she is based. These classes have been on effective communication for electronic and hard copy publications, marketing and PR and English language. Half of her career has involved: training within the European Institutions, teaching English for special purposes (academia, business and science); training corporate executives from multi nationals such as Merck Sharp Dohme and BP in key note speaking and cross-cultural communication and working on speech making and effective communication with clients such as Spanish Cabinet Minister Cristina Narbona (in 1993).

As a journalist she has worked on print and web publications and is at the moment working as senior journalist and editor-in-chief, at [Tipik Communications](#), creating content for print, electronic and audiovisual media. Projects include: editor- in-chief and principle writer for the EU Directorate for Regional Affairs quarterly magazine, [Panorama](#); the creation of a [film on the Outermost Regions](#); various publications for [EuropeAid](#); providing content for EU sites such as DG Agri's [Healthy Eating campaign](#), the [50 th Anniversary](#) site, the home page of the Commission, DG JLS and others; participating in the reconstruction of DG Enterprise and Industry's website; working on the Activities of the European Union – [Summaries of legislation](#); editing legislative texts. Other contracts include the writing and illustration of the Guide to the [EU's Sustainable Development](#) policy, camera and [voiceover work](#) for the company's [multimedia department](#).

She is also responsible for writing marketing copy and has developed slogans for the Year of Intercultural Dialogue ([It's not them and us, it's you and me](#)) Enterprise Europe Network ([Your business is our business](#)), DG JLS, DG Enterprise and Industry ([We mean business](#)) and others.

Ms Acton has a Masters in Applied Linguistics with a focus on language and gender, and the pragmatics of communication.

Work experience

Dates	2007-PRESENT:
Occupation or position held	Trainer in communications skills, senior journalist, researcher and content manager, project manager, audio visual work, marketing copy writer
Main activities and responsibilities	Recent training of various subjects in the European Institutions Designing training courses, liaising with clients to identify needs, training at the Commission and Parliament 2010 Dg Regio Writing for the internet - one day class Writing for the intranet - one day 2010 – 2011 Tipik Communication, Brussels Writing effectively and efficiently - half day Writing for the institutions - half day Interviewing techniques - half day 2011 Parliament Writing and organising an intranet - one day 28-07-2011 Parliament Internet writing course - one day 39-04-2011 Parliament Journalistic writing course - one day 28-09-2012 – present, to run until end of June 2013 two days a month Parliament Interpreters The invisible interpreter - a high level English language class 23-11-2012 EACEA – Turning factsheets into success stories D G Comm course on the use of story telling in speech writing Currently developing a course to run over two days as a pilot study start 2013.
Main activities and responsibilities	Communications activities: Client liaison, project planning, designing training courses, coordination of production teams: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Writing and editing Panorama, DG Regio's quarterly magazine which entails travelling around Europe to cover news articles and write features• Working with Tipik's audio visual department to provide pieces to dub into English, provide pieces to camera and voice overs• Creation of an eight minute film, responsible for all elements including script, editing, voice over, etc• Training DG Regio on how to write for the intranet• Writing a significant presentation for EUROCONTROL- CND air traffic management systems
	Cont/...

- Working with designers and photographers to plan lay-outs
- Finalising the guide to EuropeAid's cooperation in Asia
- Writing project guides for Eco-innovation
- Writing thematic brochures for Intelligent Energy Europe
- Completing an eight panel, wall chart/poster on EuropeAid's cooperation in Asia
- Planning and monitoring the design and creating the slogans for four EuropeAid posters
- Rebranding the verbal identity of DG Enterprise and Industry – slogans, taglines and elevator pitches
- Responding to calls for tender with TIPIK's commercial team
- Writing a variety of brochures and newsletters on subjects such as REACH and for clients including the Enterprise Europe Network and Intelligent Energy European addition
- Writing regular articles, to tight deadlines, for Panorama, the home page of the European Commission and of President Barroso
- Slogans for the EU's year of intercultural dialogue: "It is not them and us, it's you and me." Enterprise Europe Network
- Slogans for DG Enterprise: "We mean business" "Small business thinks big at European SME week" "Think ahead, get ahead, stay ahead"
- Slogans for DG Justice, Freedom and Security: "Predict, Prevent Protect – Your know-how, our funding – making tomorrow safer"
- Slogans for [TIPIK communications](#)

From 2006 - 2007:

Client liaison, project planning, coordination of production team, budget monitoring:

- The EU guide to the Sustainable Development Strategy – 80 page handbook
- The guide to EuropeAid's cooperation with Asia – 70 page handbook

In addition

- Writing articles for internet publication to deadline for the homepage of the Commission, the Barroso site, other DG COMM projects and the European council
- Specialist research – e.g. the guide book to the publication of legislation in Europe

From 2005-2006: Writing, translating, proof reading and formatting a wide variety of EU orientated documents and press releases for private businesses

- Projects include ADELA, N-Lex, OPOCE, the Activities of the European Union – Summaries of legislation and various PR requests
- Proof reading and correcting technical, legislative and commercial texts
- Validation of translated or original version texts

From 2004-2005:

- Advising on the use of descriptive vocabulary, hypertext links and the creation of glossaries
- Testing and validating online sites
- Creating hyperlinks, menu pages and indexes
- Formatting and laying out pages for web publishing
- Encoding data on pages proof read, verified and corrected

Main activities and responsibilities

Name and address of employer
Type of business or sector

Tipik, Avenue de Tervueren 270, 1150 Brussels
Information and communication management for public and corporate affairs

Dates	2000-2004
Occupation or position held	Full time teacher/trainer/PR
Main activities and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training clients for target specific performances, namely keynote speeches, presentations, specific negotiations, publications ▪ Analysing material for effective communication techniques, not just linguistic but more often stylistic ▪ Working on cross-cultural effects and public relations, making the message culturally appropriate ▪ English courses both to business clients with a slant towards communication within the business environment and general English ▪ Organized testing, conducting continual assessment based on project work and designing courses
Name and address of employer	Business Department, CLL, (Centre de Langues, Louvain), Passage de la Vecquée, 17 - Bruxelles
Type of business or sector	Coaching English and PR techniques to adults within companies and other organizations
Dates	1994-1999
Occupation or position held	Full time teacher/trainer/PR
Main activities and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aiding clients based within companies and other organizations, such as MERCK, BP Spain, ALCATEL to communicate effectively, both with regards to style and content. ▪ Helping clients understand the cultural perspective of the Anglophone media ▪ Working with senior civil servants and Cabinet Minister, Christina Narbonna, at Neuvos Ministerios, perfecting speeches and press conferences ▪ Training clients for specific events, paying attention to cultural considerations and effective communication ▪ Running total immersion courses for ALCATEL executives. ▪ Designing and running courses employees of the Marine Institute, part of the Medio Ambiente/ Department for the Environment
Name and address of employer	LinguaCenter, Calle Caracas 8, Madrid 128010, Spain
Type of business or sector	Coaching English and PR techniques to adults within companies and other organizations
Dates	Every Summer between 1993-1997
Occupation or position held	Teacher/Trainer
Main activities and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teaching foreign post graduates English for Academic purposes, meaning: effective note taking, efficient use of research facilities including the inter- and intra- nets, giving presentations, writing term papers and theses and so on. ▪ In May and June of 1998: Training two groups of Czech teachers in the use of drama and creative writing in the TEFL class and on how to prepare material aimed at phonetics and phonology ▪ While working on her MA, Ms Acton also helped to run the teacher training module for undergraduate students interested in pursuing TEFL as a career.
Name and address of employer	University of Wales, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2DG, UK
Type of business or sector	Teaching English for Academic Purposes and Teacher Training as part of a Socrates Scheme

Dates	1989-1992
Occupation or position held	Journalist
Main activities and responsibilities	Identifying issues of interest arising from and reporting on court sessions and council meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewing • Investigating stories • Freelancing on national papers • Journalism with particular focus on local government.
Name and address of employer	The Staffordshire Newsletter, The Publishing Centre, Derby Street, Stafford, ST16 2DT
Type of business or sector	Media

Dates	1987-1989
Occupation or position held	Junior reporter ('87) Chief reporter ('89)
Main activities and responsibilities	Started as a trainee on a local paper: hatches, matches and dispatches (births, marriages, obits), then onto harder news. When chief reporter on The Holyhead and Anglesey Mail, she was responsible for finding front page leads and filling the paper as a whole, to weekly deadlines. Ms Acton also headed a team of three other journalists and telesales staff and freelanced for nationals.
Name and address of employer	North Wales Weekly News, Deganwy, Gwynedd
Type of business or sector	Media

Education and training

Dates	1997-1999
Title of qualification awarded	MA Applied Linguistics, research based course
Principal subjects/occupational skills covered	Language acquisition by adults, language and gender, pragmatics – entailing research and computer skills
Name and type of organisation providing education and training	University of Wales, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2DG, UK

Dates	April-June 1990
Title of qualification awarded	Cambridge Cert TEFL (Teaching of English as a Foreign Language to Adults)
Principal subjects/occupational skills covered	In depth analysis of the structure of English, classroom management, communication skills, teaching of adults as a discrete skill, presentation skills
Name and type of organisation providing education and training	Stoke on Trent College, Stoke Road, Shelton, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 2DG

Dates	September-June 1987-1988, day release course
Title of qualification awarded	National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ) – Preliminary certificate in journalism qualification
Principal subjects/occupational skills covered	Law, shorthand, interview techniques and computer studies
Name and type of organisation providing education and training	North East Wales Inst of Higher Education, Wrexham, LL11 2AN

Dates	1988-1989
Title of qualification awarded	BA Hons English Literature, 2:1
Principal subjects/occupational skills covered	First two years combined with Classics
Name and type of organisation providing education and training	University of Wales, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2DG, UK

Personal skills and competences

Mother tongue(s)	English
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Other language(s)

French

Self-assessment

European level (*)

French

Understanding				Speaking				Writing	
Listening		Reading		Spoken interaction		Spoken production			
C2	Proficient user	B2	Proficient user	C1	Proficient user	B2	Proficient user	A2	Basic User

(*) Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

Social skills and competences

Ms Acton has traveled and worked in multi cultural environments throughout most of her life. These factors have led her to become: empathic, communicative, socially adaptable and independent.

Travelling around Europe as part of her work for Panorama and as a trainer, Ms Acton has shown herself to be effective at establishing contact with people, finding the information needed for the articles she is writing and synthesizing the elements, all within very tight deadlines.

Having selected pragmatics and language and gender as her main subsidiary subjects at MA level, she has an insight into the difference in language use between cultures and sexes.

Organisational skills and competences

Organisational skills are vital in the life of any journalist or teacher/trainer and keeping an eye on how situations are unfolding, what has been done and what is still outstanding, is part of her job. Getting the very best out of people is also a valuable skill she displayed when teaching, training and team leading.

At Tipik, Ms Acton has been responsible for leading a variety of projects, involving teams including web and graphic designers and other journalists. When employed by other organisations she has shown herself to be a capable team leader – demonstrating initiative and analytical thought in her response to unforeseen hurdles.

During her time at various agencies she has led teams of up to 15 on both long and short-term projects. She was CLL's General English department's extended course supervisor and has run immersion courses for executives of ALCATEL and BP in Madrid.

Technical skills and competences

Ms Acton designed the layout of the 80 page guide to the EU's Sustainable Development Strategy and a 70 page guide to the EU's involvement in Asia, and other booklets. She was responsible for the design of Panorama – her proposal for a complete revamp of the magazine was embraced. Other publications she has written and then helped design including brochures, posters and 'flash' based slides for keynote speeches and presentations.

She attended a writing for journalists in English, 2-day seminar, organized by Tipik and given by Robert Taylor (former contributor to The Economist), European Research Associates, Brussels, 18 and 20 September 2006; a Writing for the web in French, 2-day seminar, organised by Tipik and given by Jean-Marc Hardy and Joël Ronez, Brussels, 13 and 31 March 2006 and a Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI), 1-day course, Tipik internal training, Brussels, 2 February 2005.

She is familiar with Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and has worked with desktop publishing packages. She was responsible for the writing, layout and printing of two guides to English produced by CLL. and publicity material for the Fisheries Science Centre at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver.

Artistic skills and competences

She has brevet superior in [Artisanal Bookbinding](#) and is a published general and technical illustrator – botany/zoology. She has had successful exhibitions in the UK and Canada.

Other skills and competences

Interested in social policy, Ms Acton has been involved in voluntary work, fund raising for Greenpeace in Vancouver, recording news bulletins for the Royal National Institute for the Blind when she was studying in Wales and helping in the bindery of the League Braille in Brussels.

Driving licence

Yes – but unused for ten years

Additional information

In the interest of brevity, she has not covered her full employment history within her career as a trainer, having worked on a voluntary basis in Greece and Canada. The latter post involved teaching immigrants from Hong Kong in 1994-5, around the handover period to the Chinese.

References

Emeritus Professor Carl James,
Department of Linguistics, University of Wales, Bangor,
Gwynedd LL57 2DG,

Ms Caroline Taylor, project manager – publications, Tipik
Tipik Communication Agency S.A.
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